CHAPTER III

THE MOROS AND PAGANS[1]

WHO ARE THE MOROS?

IF you can, conjure up a picture of the barbaric Huns, or the terrible Mongols, or better yet of the fierce Moors, attacking, killing, and pillaging, and you will have a picture of the Moros as they fought, and harried, and plundered during ages past. Commander Charles Wilkes in his narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the years 1838 to i842,[2] one of the few early accounts of the Philippines written by an American, tells of his visit to conclude a treaty with the Sultan of Sulu and gives no pretty account of the Moros. Describing the scene when the audience with the ranking Datu was held, the Commander writes: "The whole was a strange mixture of tragedy and farce j and the group of natives were not far removed in ap-pearance from the supernumeraries that a Turkish tragedy might have brought together in the green-room of a theater." Continuing, he thus describes the Joloanos: "A set of more cowardly looking miscreants I never saw. They appeared ready either to trade with us, pick our pockets, or cut our throats, as an opportunity might offer." Truth compels me to state that today the Moros' reputation for blood-thirstiness is not what it was of yore. Tardily and grudgingly they are learning how to live at peace among themselves and with their neighbors.

[1] **This chapter -was read by Judge Teopisto Guingona, last Chief of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes.**

[2] **Found in Blair and Robertson, *The Philtyfine Islands,* Vol. XLIII, pp. 148-188,**